

Last Word in Eavesdropping: 'Infinity' Bugging Device

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One afternoon last week, I was initiated into one of the latest marvels of the electronic age.

From The Bulletin office, I dialed a phone number in New York City.

~~A small boxlike gadget,~~ ^{about} five by five inches,

against the mouthpiece until I heard a whirring sound. Then I removed the device, put it back in my pocket, and listened on the phone.

At the other end, the phone never rang. No one answered it.

Yet I could hear all the conversation in that room—and a good deal from an adjoining room.

Two women were talking girl-talk—beauty shop appointments after work miniskirts and the like. A man was reading off a column of figures. In the background, recorded music was playing.

After a couple of minutes, I hung up. No one in New York knew I had been listening in.

Works on Any Phone

However, I had their permission.

The gadget, known as an infinity transmitter, is made by the Minirox Systems Corp. in the Empire State Building, and the phone number I dialed was theirs. Lewis Lutine, the firm's director of sales and marketing, sat beside me as I eavesdropped.

But the device will work on any phone.

It consists of two parts:

One, about three by three inches, is fitted into the base of the telephone. The other—~~is carried around by the eavesdropper~~. To listen in on any conversation in or near the room with the bugged phone he simply dials the number and, as I did, holds his "activator" against the mouthpiece until he hears a whirring—the tipoff that the transmitter at the other end is functioning. From that point on, he can listen in as long as he wants to—and can afford to pay the phone charges.

Law enforcement agencies and security forces are important customers for this device, the company says. In its words, it "makes it easy to enact surveillance from the impractical to the immediate. As long as you're near telephone, you can maintain monitoring of room conversations any place in the world you can dial directly."

Other Gadgets

Then there is a stereo recorder, five by two and three-quarters inches, small enough to fit in a man's pocket, with microphones concealed in cufflinks or fountain pen, yet capable of recording two hours of conversation. A similar unit using a